Documents and Archiving Techniques

What is an Archive?

-Simply put, an archive is a where an institution deposits and maintains its records

Who has archives?

- Corporations
- Universities and colleges
- Private organizations and societies
- Branches of the armed forces
- Military units
- Government at all levels

What types of materials are deposited in an archive?

- Memoranda
- Letters
- Photographs
- Reports
- Drawings
- Sound Recordings
- Any material that records the activities of an institution

Does an institution deposit all of its records?
-Generally speaking, No.

Not enough physical space.

Basic Rule – If records constitute the data upon which important decisions were made or illustrate the decision making process, ***its should be placed in the archive*!**

The Field Historian is a critical player in preserving the army's institutional records which will eventually end up in an archive.

In our time, preservation is a very big problem!

What does it take?

- Guidance from other historians
- Effective management of records
- Keen Historical Sense

Collecting Materials

- Staff journals
- WARNORDs, OPORDs, FRAGOs
- Briefing slides
- Memoranda
- Maps and graphic overlays
- Captured enemy documents
- Advises records managers (G1/S1) on historical value of materials

The Digital Challenge

- Units increasingly using digital forms of communications
- The historian *must* work with staff to establish procedures to capture emails, digitized briefing slides, orders and other materials
- Solutions to challenge require technology and technological skills

Field Historians build Foundations

- Army's Record and Collective Memory exists in the documents it produces
- Collection and deposit of materials allows future historians to tell the Army story
- ***Vietnam-*** Many records from units assigned in combat zones made it back to the states however, many remain to be screened, evaluated, reorganized and disposed of.